United Nations PBC/3/OC/SR.2

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
12 February 2009

Original: English

Peacebuilding Commission
Third session
Organizational Committee

Summary record of the 2nd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 7 January 2009, at 9.45 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Takasu ..... (Japan)
later: Mr. Muñoz ..... (Chile)

Contents

Adoption of the agenda

Employment and income-generation and private sector development in post-conflict countries

Election of the Chairperson and other officers

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent *within one week of the date of this document* to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza.

Any corrections to the record of the public meetings of the Committee at this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

09-22128 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 9.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda (PBC/3/OC/8)

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Employment and income-generation and private sector development in post-conflict countries

2. **The Chairperson** said that an amended version of the paper on the outcome of the Peacebuilding Commission's discussions on employment and income-generation and private sector development in post-conflict countries had been circulated following an informal meeting of the Commission on 17 December 2008. He took it that the Organizational Committee wished to take note of the paper.

3. *It was so decided.*

4. **Mr. Wolfe** (Jamaica) said that his delegation attached great importance to the paper, which was based on the premise that equal attention must be paid to peace, justice and security, and development in order for countries to emerge successfully from post-conflict situations. Unless due consideration was given to the development agenda, even while conditions in a country were still highly sensitive, post-conflict recovery and sustainable development could be jeopardized. While cognizant that such issues as stability and peace would also have to be given due attention in the initial phases, he stressed that the principles set forth in the paper must be reflected on the ground and should also be taken into account in the preparation of strategy papers.

5. **The Chairperson**, noting that the involvement of many actors, including the private sector, was needed to integrate young people and former combatants into productive activities, said he hoped that the paper would serve as a good starting point for the Commission's continued work in that regard over coming months.

Election of the Chairperson and other officers

6. **The Chairperson** said that over the past two years the Commission had made great strides towards achieving the purposes for which it had been established. It could be particularly proud of the concrete progress to which it had contributed in each of the four countries on its agenda. Discussions in the Commission's various configurations had highlighted a number of common elements, including respect for national ownership and the importance of accountable nation-building, that were vital for successful peacebuilding in any post-conflict country. He hoped that those points would be further elaborated in close cooperation with other interested organizations.

7. The challenges were still enormous, and peacebuilding would be a very important issue for the United Nations and the international community over the next two or three decades. He hoped that his successor would strengthen the Commission's work in three key areas. First, broad strategic and policy discussions, not limited to a country-specific context, were required on many issues, including youth unemployment, the role of the private sector, and the relationship between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The Organizational Committee could serve as a useful forum for such discussions. Second, the need for concrete change on the ground, including, inter alia, the proper delivery of basic public services and opportunities for young people to engage in productive work, could not be overemphasized. Third, since the Commission could not meet its goals by itself, it needed to work in close coordination with the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, mobilize stakeholders within and outside the United Nations, further strengthen partnerships with other international organizations and reach out to civil society.

8. The year ahead would be another challenging one for the Commission. Preparations for the report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and early recovery would test its ability to provide substantial input to United Nations discussions. The review of the Peacebuilding Fund's terms of reference and preparations for the comprehensive review of the Commission would also be important for its future work.

9. He said that, since the membership of the Organizational Committee for the third session had now been finalized, it was his understanding that the Committee was prepared to elect the Chairperson of the Commission. The candidacy of Mr. Muñoz, the Permanent Representative of Chile, for the position of Chairperson of the Commission, had been endorsed by the Committee members.

10. *Mr. Muñoz (Chile) was elected Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission by acclamation.*

11. *Mr. Muñoz (Chile) took the Chair.*

12. **The Chairperson** said that the experience gained by the Commission over the past two and a half years was its most important asset as it sought to be an effective and timely instrument providing specific responses to the mandates established in its founding resolutions.

13. His country felt special ties with the Commission, having undergone a difficult process of national reconciliation following its return to democracy after a 17-year dictatorship. It hoped to draw on that experience to strengthen the Commission's work.

14. In view of the Commission's growing agenda, and the current global economic and financial crisis, 2009 would be a year of complex challenges. While the impact of the crisis on less developed countries was particularly severe, countries with more resources were not immune and would need to make greater sacrifices in order to continue providing financial support for the Commission's projects.

15. Outlining the objectives that should be pursued by the Commission in 2009, he said, firstly, that it should continue to raise its profile in all forums as an actor that contributed to identifying priorities in post-conflict societies and was able to mobilize the will and resources for a sustainable peace. A second key task was to find new partners, such as non-governmental organizations, foundations and the private sector, interested in working with the Commission on peacebuilding activities. In that connection, the role of the Peacebuilding Support Office in seeking new and small non-traditional donors was essential. Thirdly, new arrangements for the early recovery of post-conflict countries should be developed, perhaps including the creation of a civilian corps of volunteer experts which could be rapidly deployed in accordance with the principle of national ownership.

16. A fourth objective was to develop coordination, both at Headquarters and in the field, between the Commission and other multilateral, regional and subregional organizations. It was also important to strengthen the Commission's ties with the Security Council and the General Assembly, and to build a stronger working relationship with the Economic and Social Council in order to close the gap between peacekeeping and development. Emphasizing the linkages between those two activities, he said that the obligation to deliver concrete change on the ground would only be achieved if the foundations for development were laid as part of the peacebuilding process. Similarly, the complementarity between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and in particular the Commission's potential role as a catalyst for institutional rebuilding, should be highlighted.

17. Lastly, it was vital to establish a vision for the Commission in 2010; specifically, the role of the Organizational Committee must be refined and the Peacebuilding Fund's terms of reference revisited. Furthermore, recent experience relating to the distribution of seats in the Organizational Committee highlighted the existence of certain shortcomings that needed to be corrected.

18. A retreat for Commission members would be organized in the coming weeks to finalize a programme of work for the current year.

19. He understood that the candidacy of Mr. Park In-kook, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea, for one of the offices of Vice-Chairperson of the Commission had been endorsed by the Committee members for a one-year period beginning on 1 January 2009. Consultations were under way with the delegation of South Africa with regard to the nomination of the second Vice-Chairperson.

20. *Mr. Park In-kook (Republic of Korea) was elected Vice-Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission by acclamation.*

21. **The Chairperson** said he understood that the Committee wished to confirm the selection of the Chairpersons of the Commission's four country-specific configurations and of the Working Group on Lessons Learned, for the period until 31 December 2009. It was also his understanding that the Organizational Committee had agreed that the Chairpersons of the country-specific configurations would represent members of the relevant country-specific configuration that they would be chairing.

22. *Mr. Lidén (Sweden) was elected Chairperson of the country-specific configuration on Burundi; Mr. Grauls (Belgium) was elected Chairperson of the country-specific configuration on the Central African Republic; Ms. Viotti (Brazil) was elected Chairperson of the country-specific configuration on Guinea-Bissau; Mr. Majoor (Netherlands) was elected Chairperson of the country-specific configuration on Sierra Leone; and Ms. Gallardo Hernández*

(El Salvador) was elected Chairperson of the Working Group on Lessons Learned.

23. **The Chairperson**, recalling that the Peacebuilding Support Office, as one of the three pillars of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, had a crucial role to play in ensuring the success of the Commission's activities, said that he was looking forward to strengthening the Commission's natural ties with the Office under the leadership of the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support.

24. **Ms. Lute** (Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support) said that the Secretary-General viewed 2009 as a key year for peacebuilding. With its arrangements scheduled for review in just a year's time, the Commission was seen by many as one of the few successful outcomes of the 2005 World Summit, with a measurable impact on societies emerging from conflict. It was, however, still important to ask whether it was meeting the expectations of the people and societies with which it was engaged and to consider how further improvements could be achieved. The Peacebuilding Support Office and the Secretary-General were ready to give substantive support to the Commission in all its configurations; the Office had been reconfigured to provide full-time support to each configuration and to ensure synergies between those different configurations and the Commission's overall work.

25. Noting that the Commission should now strengthen its work by building on the experience of the past two and a half years, she said that the 2009 agenda was clear and daunting. More must be done to bring in new partners; strengthen working relationships across multilateral, regional and subregional organizations; participate with colleagues in the United Nations system to develop new approaches for early recovery; and work to strengthen the Commission's relationship with the General Assembly, Security Council and Economic and Social Council. In view of the large-scale growth in peacekeeping efforts and expenditure, peacebuilding must also become an integral part of peacekeeping activities, so as to ensure that those activities helped to start the process of building a durable peace.

26. **The Chairperson** said that the representative of Brazil had asked to participate in the discussion of the item under consideration.

27. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, Ms. Viotti (Brazil) took a place at the Committee table.*

28. **Ms. Viotti** (Brazil) said that, pursuant to the confirmation of her delegation's chairmanship of the Guinea-Bissau country-specific configuration, she looked forward to assisting the Government and people of that country in meeting their most essential peacebuilding needs, including the stabilization of the political environment and the mobilization of resources needed to undertake much-needed reform. It was crucial to focus on concrete initiatives that directly impacted on the lives of the people of Guinea-Bissau in order to demonstrate the credibility of the Commission.

29. *Ms. Viotti (Brazil) withdrew.*

30. **Mr. Wolfe** (Jamaica), speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, agreed that the role of the Commission should be given greater prominence throughout the world and emphasized the importance of the Peacebuilding Support Office in 2009 in bringing about success on the ground.

31. He was disappointed by the Organizational Committee's failure to engage more actively with regard to the Commission's priorities. He agreed that the move from peacekeeping to peacebuilding should be made as seamless as possible, so that the Commission could take concrete action when it became involved at the peacebuilding stage. The Committee should engage not just with the Security Council, but also with the General Assembly and with the Economic and Social Council.

32. **Ms. El Alaoui** (Morocco) said that her delegation was committed to working with the Commission to contribute to sustainable peace and development in post-conflict countries. A coherent, coordinated approach to peacebuilding was crucial: the role of the Commission must include the elaboration, together with the Governments of the countries concerned, of an integrated strategy for peace consolidation and mobilization of resources. It was also important to ensure that all stakeholders, including donors, followed through on commitments made.

33. **Mr. Amieyeofori** (Nigeria) said that his delegation shared the new Chairperson's vision for the future and agreed that it was important to consolidate already established partnerships, especially with regional and subregional organizations. Consideration must be given to subregional issues, such as small and

light weapons, which continued to threaten stability, and to local capacity, which played an important role in the peacebuilding process.

34. **Mr. Komárek** (European Community), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the Commission was a significant element in the architecture of the United Nations. The European Union shared the goals of the Commission and would continue to participate actively in its activities.

35. **Mr. Park** In-kook (Republic of Korea) said that, as a newly elected Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, he looked forward to using his country's first-hand experience in emerging from conflict to contribute to the Commission's endeavours in helping other post-conflict countries to rebuild and develop.

36. **Mr. Punkrasin** (Thailand) welcomed the steady progress in Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and Burundi, as well as the addition of the Central African Republic to the Commission's agenda. The Commission should not become complacent, however, given the enormous challenges that lay ahead. It should continue to add value by consolidating progress, mobilizing resources, and strengthening partnerships, as part of a holistic approach to achieving more tangible results on the ground. It was important for reforms to be undertaken in post-conflict countries in order to ensure long-term change. Furthermore, the Commission's activities should be incorporated in United Nations missions at an early stage; peace could not be made, kept or built without national reconciliation and an emphasis on national ownership, or if the root causes of conflict were not addressed.

37. Enhancing cooperation between the Commission and countries emerging from conflict remained the highest priority; however, given its increasing workload, it was even more important that the Commission should develop synergistic partnerships with other political, security, humanitarian and development stakeholders in order to prevent countries from falling back into crisis. Predictable and sustainable funding was crucial and the Peacebuilding Fund, which played an important role in that regard, should respond in a more timely and effective manner. His Government had recently approved a further contribution to the Fund.

38. **Mr. Paudel** (Nepal) said that peacebuilding was a long and arduous process and that it was important to root out the causes of conflict and to boost development activities.

39. **Mr. Cancela** (Uruguay) said that, as one of the leading contributors of peacekeeping troops, his country had significant experience in peacekeeping, but it was important to recognize that, on the ground, the processes of peacekeeping and peacebuilding often overlapped. He looked forward to applying his country's experience in both areas to support the Commission's work.

40. **Mr. Sangqu** (South Africa) said that the mere fact that all four country-specific configurations involved African countries was indicative of the daunting challenges facing many countries on that continent, which sought to emerge from their difficult situations but needed the support of the international community. The Commission thus embodied the will of the international community. South Africa remained committed to finding creative solutions to the challenges facing countries emerging from conflict.

41. **Mr. Herczyński** (Poland) said that security, development and human rights were closely interlinked aspects of peacebuilding to which his Government was especially committed. Poland looked forward to using its own experiences to help post-conflict countries undergo a successful transformation.

42. **Mr. Koné** (Burkina Faso), endorsing the goals outlined by the Chairperson, said that his country was fully committed to contributing to the Commission's efforts in assisting countries emerging from conflict.

43. **Mr. Zinsou** (Benin) said that it was important to continue creating synergies between the peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes in order to reinforce links with the Security Council. More emphasis had to be placed on rooting out the causes of conflict, while the international community was in a position to influence changes on the ground in post-conflict countries. The restoration of the State and of its institutions and the establishment of an economy of peace were also of the utmost importance.

44. **Mr. Benfreha** (Algeria) said that his delegation was committed to supporting the Commission's activities, which played a crucial role in ensuring stability in countries emerging from conflict.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.